

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 07512 161657Z

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-08 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 L-01

DHA-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 (ISO) W

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O 161317Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7920

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 7512

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, UK, AR

SUBJECT: CONGRESSMAN DRINAN'S VISIT TO ARGENTINA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7459

1. DRINAN WITH REST OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PARTY LEFT ARGENTINA AT 1700 LOCAL HOURS NOVEMBER 15, WITH BRIEF REST STOP PLANNED IN RIO. ON WAY TO AIRPORT NOVEMBER 15, PARTY REALIZED THAT IT DID NOT HAVE HOTEL RESERVATIONS IN RIO, AND DRINAN ASKED EMBOFF TO SEEK ASSISTANCE OF AMCONSULATE RIO. NIACT TELEGRAM WAS SENT TO RIO, WITH OUR APOLOGIES.

2. LATE AFTERNOON OF NOVEMBER 12 ABOUT 50 YOUNG DEMONSTRATORS APPEARED IN FRONT OF HOTEL WHERE VISITORS LODGED AND SHOUTED ANTI AI SLOGANS, WAVED BANNERS, ETC. DEMONSTRATORS DISPERSED AFTER 10 MINUTES, AND NO VIOLENCE OR POLICE CONFRONTATION WAS REPORTED. PRESS IDENTIFIED DEMONSTRATORS AS MEMBERS OF ORGANIZATION CALLED NATIONAL PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT. (WE HAVE LITTLE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT THIS GROUP, BUT UNDERSTAND IT IS ULTRA CONSERVATIVE ORGANIZATION FORMED BY SOME RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS.) PRESS COVERAGE OF DEMONSTRATION WAS VERY LIMITED. AI GROUP WERE NOT RPT NOT IN HOTEL AT TIME.

3. IN EARLY EVENING OF NOVEMBER 12, DRINAN ASKED OUR ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING PERMISSION TO VISIT PRISON IN CITY OF CORDOBA, WHERE HE AND MS. FEENEY PLANNED TO GO NEXT DAY. AT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 07512 161657Z

SAME TIME MS. FEENEY MADE SAME REQUEST TO BRITISH EMBASSY.

BRITISH REFUSED TO RELAY REQUEST TO GOA, POINTING OUT IMPROPRIETY OF ASKING ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE AFTER WEEK IN ARGENTINA, AND NEAR IMPOSSIBILITY OF GOA BEING ABLE TO ARRANGE PERMISSION ON WEEKEND WITH AUTHORITIES IN PROVINCIAL GOVT AND ANOTHER ARMY COMMAND. WE DID DISCUSS REQUEST WITH FONMINISTRY HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER, WHO WAS INDIGNANT OVER TIMING AND LACK OF PLANNING, AND REFUSED TO RELAY REQUEST.

4. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, DRINAN AND MS. FEENEY VISITED CORDOBA NOVEMBER 13, RETURNING TO BUENOS AIRES MORNING OF NOVEMBER 14. DURING VISIT MS. FEENEY WAS "MOBBED," IN HER WORDS, BY HOSTILE PRESS AND OTHER UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS IN HOTEL LOBBY, AND WAS UNABLE TO CONDUCT SATISFACTORY PRESS INTERVIEW.

5. MORE SERIOUSLY, DRINAN AND MS. FEENEY INTERVIEWED ARGENTINE NATIONAL JOSEFA MARTINEZ, A YOUNG GIRL CONNECTED TO FAMILY WHICH HAD WRITTEN TO AI FOR HELP, IN LOBBY OF HOTEL. MS. FEENEY GAVE MISS MARTINEZ 6000 ARGENTINE PESOS, ABOUT \$24, IN AI ASSISTANCE FUNDS. MOTHER OF MISS MARTINEZ INFORMED DRINAN NEXT MORNING THAT HER DAUGHTER HAD NOT RETURNED HOME, AND ASSUMPTION WAS THAT SHE WAS DETAINED FOR HAVING MET WITH AI. ON RETURN TO BUENOS AIRES, DRINAN REQUESTED OUR INTERVENTION TO LOCATE AND PROTECT MISS MARTINEZ.

6. EMBOFF WAS ABLE COMMUNICATE WITH MININTERIOR OFFICIAL ON NOVEMBER 14, AND EXPLAIN CONCERN OF DRINAN. OFFICIAL PROMPTLY UNDERSTOOD DELICACY OF MATTER AND PROMISED IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION. FONMINISTRY HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER WAS INFORMED MORNING OF NOVEMBER 15, BUT REPORTED NOVEMBER 16 THAT HE HAD NO INFORMATION YET ON STATUS OF MISS MARTINEZ. BOTH DRINAN AND LORD AVEBURY RAISED INTENTION OF MAKING PUBLIC PROTEST OVER DISAPPEARANCE OF MISS MARTINEZ. AFTER DISCUSSION WITH U. S. AND BRITISH EMBOFFS THEY CONCLUDED THAT IMMEDIATE PUBLICITY OF THAT NATURE MIGHT PREJUDICE SAFETY OF MISS MARTINEZ. HOWEVER, IF SHE IS NOT ACCOUNTED FOR BY END OF THIS WEEK, BOTH DRINAN AND AVEBURY HAVE STATED INTENTION OF RAISING MATTER THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL AND PARLIAMENTARY CHANNELS. WE WILL OF COURSE REPORT IMMEDIATELY ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED CONCERNING CASE, AND IT IS CLEAR THAT GOA IS AWARE OF EFFECT THAT ANY

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PAGE 03 BUENOS 07512 161657Z

UNFORTUNATE OUTCOME OF MATTER COULD HAVE UPON VISITORS IN PREPARATION OF THEIR REPORT AND THEIR COMMENTS UPON RETURNING HOME.

7. AMONG OTHER PRIVATE CALLS, DRINAN SAW PAPAL NUNCIO AND NY TIMES CORRESPONDENT JUAN DE ONIS ON NOVEMBER 15. DRINAN AND MS. FEENEY SPENT SUNDAY AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 14 AT HOME OF EMBOFF, WITH CHARGE, AND HAD OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE

VIEWS OF GENERAL SITUATION IN ARGENTINA. WE ARE NOT PREPARED
TO PREDICT EITHER FINDINGS OF AI OR INDIVIDUAL REACTIONS OF
DRINAN AND AVEBURY CONCERNING VISIT TO ARGENTINA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BUENOS07512
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760427-0565
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761145/aaaabmws.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BUENOS AIRES 7459
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONGRESSMAN DRINAN'S VISIT TO ARGENTINA
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, OREP, UK, AR, (DRINAN, ROBERT F)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006